

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 08413 020126Z
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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1889

S E C R E T CANBERRA 8413

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FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OAKLEY FROM DCM

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, AS
SUBJECT: US-SOVIET TALKS ON INDIAN OCEAN ARMS LIMITATIONS

REF: CANBERRA 8051

1. AS REPORTED IN REFTEL, DFA SECRETARY NICK PARKINSON CALLED AMBASSADOR ALSTON IN NOVEMBER 16 AT THE REQUEST OF FONMIN PEACOCK TO REGISTER AUSTRALIA'S CONCERN OVER US-USSR NEGOTIATIONS ON THE INDIAN OCEAN. PARKINSON ASKED FOR SPECIFIC ASSURANCES THAT THE US-USSR AGREEMENT WOULD NOT DEROGATE FROM OR QUALIFY THE US COMMITMENT TO AUSTRALIA OR US FREEDOM TO ACT UNDER THE ANZUS TREATY; AND THAT US-AUSTRALIAN DEFENSE COOPERATION WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED. FURTHER, THE GOA REQUESTED PUBLIC ASSURANCES THAT US NAVAL VESSELS WOULD CONTINUE TO VISIT WESTERN AUSTRALIA. WE HAVE NOT RPT NOT RECEIVED AN ANSWER TO REFTEL AS YET.

2. THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE CINCPAC REP AT THIS EMBASSY, WE RECEIVED A JCS REPORT CONCERNING THE INITIAL
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US-AUSTRALIAN JOINT STAFF TALKS WHICH WERE HELD IN WASHINGTON NOVEMBER 1-22. MAJOR GENERAL J.R.D. CLELLAND, JCS J-5, LED THE U.S. SIDE. THE AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION CONSISTED OF AIR VICE MARSHAL JORDAN, CHAIRMAN, JOINT OPERATIONS AND PLANS, AUSTRALIAN DEFENSE STAFF; MAJOR GENERAL P. FALKLAND, AUSTRALIAN ATTACHE; AND WING COMMANDER S. BACK, ATTACHE STAFF OFFICER. THESE TALKS WERE

LABELED "EXPLORATORY...AN INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF IDEAS, BEARING NO COMMITMENTS." HOWEVER, THE SECTION ON THE INDIAN OCEAN WAS OF GREAT INTEREST TO US. IT READS AS FOLLOWS: "INCLUDED IN INDIAN OCEAN DISCUSSION WERE NEW FORMAT OF MID EAST FORCE, POLICY FOR U.S. PRESENCE AND DEPLOYMENTS, PORT VISITS, DIEGO GARCIA CONSTRUCTION, AND AIR OPERATIONS. INDIAN OCEAN NEGOTIATIONS WERE DISCUSSED AT THE DEFENSE OFFICIALS CONSULTATIONS (OSD LEVEL) ON 14-15 NOVEMBER. THE AUSTRALIANS WERE TOLD THAT THE IMMEDIATE GOAL IS STABILIZATION WITH POSSIBLE FUTURE REDUCTIONS AND THAT U.S. WOULD NOT AGREE TO (1) INCLUDE ALLIES; (2) INCLUDE BASES OUTSIDE INDIAN OCEAN; OR (3) EXPAND DEFINITION OF IMMEDIATE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. THEY WERE ASSURED THAT THEIR CONCERNS WOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AND U.S. WOULD CONTINUE TO EXERCISE WITH AUSTRALIAN FORCES AND CONDUCT U.S. NAVAL VISITS TO WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PORTS. OTHER ASSURANCES: (1) U.S. WOULD NOT PERMIT THE NEGOTIATIONS TO INTERFERE WITH OUR ANZUS COMMITMENTS; (2) TRANSIT RIGHTS WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED; AND (3) NO SPECIFIC WEAPON HAS BEEN BARRED TO DATE LTHOUGH COMMITMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE WHICH PROBABLY WILL RESTRICT CERTAIN (UNNAMED) SYSTEMS FROM AREA IN THE FUTURE."

3. WE ASSUME THAT AMBASSADOR RENOUF HAS REPORTED THIS TO DFA. IF THIS IS FIRM U.S. POLICY, WE REQUEST AUTHOR-
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IZATION TO CONVEY OUR POSITION TO FONMIN PEACOCK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ALSTON

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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